



Perspectives for Happiness and Well-Being from Medical Philosophy, Hinohara-Ism, and Mindfulness

Hiroshi Bando^{1,2,iD*}, Akiyo Yoshioka¹, Yu Nishikiori¹

¹New Elderly Association (NEA), Tokushima division, Tokushima, Japan

²Medical Research/Tokushima University, Tokushima, Japan

Corresponding Author: **Hiroshi BANDO, MD, PhD, FACP** [ORCID iD](#)

Address: Tokushima University /Medical Research, Nakashowa 1-61, Tokushima 770-0943, Japan;

Email: pianomed@bronze.ocn.ne.jp

Received date: 23 August 2023; **Accepted date:** 17 September 2023; **Published date:** 04 October 2023

Citation: Bando H, Yoshioka A, Nishikiori Y. Perspectives for Happiness and Well-Being from Medical Philosophy, Hinohara-Ism, and Mindfulness. *J Health Care and Research*. 2023 Oct 04;4(3):100-103.

Copyright © 2023 Bando H, Yoshioka A, Nishikiori Y. This is an open-access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium provided the original work is properly cited.

Abstract

In terms of happiness and well-being, various philosophies and perspectives may exist, including medicine, psychosomatic medicine, integrative medicine (IM), Hinohara-ism, and so on. Meaningful concepts can be found in Robert Waldinger, Simone Weil, John Tarrant, and Shigeaki Hinohara. Several keywords leading to happiness would be time, life, attention, caution, truth, love, meditation, mindfulness, human relationships, concentration, and others. The Five Facets of Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) has been useful for evaluating worry and anxiety in response to social problems, associated with item response theory (IRT) analyses. Hinohara-ism can present adequate missions, themes, and goals for obtaining happiness and well-being for everyone.

Keywords

Attention, Human Relationship, Robert Waldinger, Shigeaki Hinohara, Simone Weil, Five Facets of Mindfulness Questionnaire

Abbreviations

FFMQ: Five Facets of Mindfulness Questionnaire

What kinds of factors are required for a person to have a happy life? The answer would be to have a happy time [1]. How should we spend our time? It's also closely related to health and well-being, and it can always be on our mind. However, it is not unpredictable and highly uncertain. Thus, there is no apparent answer. Concerning happiness, several aspects and perspectives may be present including medicine, medical practice, behavioral science, philosophy, art, and so on. Authors and collaborators have been involved in psychosomatic medicine, medical philosophy, integrative medicine (IM), and

others [2,3]. Furthermore, the problems of happiness, wellness, culture and music have been discussed in some reports on Dr. Albert Schweitzer, Sir William Osler, and Dr. Shigeaki Hinohara related to Hinohara-ism and New-Elderly Association (NEA) [4,5]. In this report, some perspectives concerning happiness, well-being and inter-personal communication would be discussed.

The feeling of happiness and the emotion of satisfaction are closely related. What provides a meaningful and satisfactory life? It would be human

relationships, which is from the world's longest scientific study of happiness [6]. As it becomes stronger, we feel healthier and happier lives. It includes both body and soul, that is, psychosomatic happiness and wellness. For the concept of happiness, Robert Waldinger has been a leader worldwide, and he presented the secrets to a contented life for people [1]. As a matter of fact, what we often talk about would be not happiness, but well-being [7].

When performing the questionnaires for the elderly, many people look back several decades and have common answers [8]. Their regrettable matters would be i) how they used their precious time, and ii) no care for what they pay attention to. Time and attention are of irreplaceable value far beyond what the words mean. Time and attention cannot be replenished later. Actually, both are life itself for a man. In the case of money, we can pay or spend it on other people. On the other hand, our time and attention are our lives themselves, which are the most valuable and indispensable.

A French philosopher, Simone Weil, stated that attention is the most precious and pure form of generosity. It is because attention and time would be the most valuable matters that a human being possesses. She showed prominent achievement in Christian mysticism [9]. The aim of her philosophy was the Search for the Good. She was so influenced by Descartes, Plato, and Kant. As the absolute Good, God is beyond known truths and we can reach God through only Love. Concerning the philosophy of Simone Weil, her interest in esoteric and occult subjects was not an eccentric sideline but emerged out of philosophical method [9]. Through the study of her works for years, John Tarrant stated in his book that attention would be the most fundamental matter of love [10]. He has been the director of an actual Zen training project and is involved in Integrative Medicine (IM) at the University of Arizona. He learned Buddhism and teaches meditation and mindfulness to physicians.

Close attention as well as love would be a two-way gift in humans. When we give our attention to the other, we can give him our life. Through this process, we can feel our existence more deeply than usual. The words attention or caution have several meanings. The

first is "priority," where each person prioritizes the most important matters and puts them at the top of the time allocation list. However, many people often complain of insufficient time to engage in activities. Second, people tend to think that they will have more spare time in the future for their hobbies and communication with others. However, it would actually be forgotten due to a lack of attention. Third, people have too many attention-grabbing things, not too many daily tasks. The attention is always fragmented because it is distracted by overstimulation. Consequently, people cannot fully recognize the pleasure and benefits from daily concentration on their activities.

For an adequate response to various stressors, mindfulness has been linked to regulating emotion. The situation of trait mindfulness was studied using the Five Facets of Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) [11]. The five facets mean the following factors, which are i) observing, ii) describing, iii) acting with awareness, iv) non-judging of inner experience, and v) non-reactivity to inner experience [12]. A higher score on the FFMQ indicates higher levels of mindfulness [13]. Furthermore, individuals with higher FFMQ showed less worry and anxiety in response to social problems and FFMQ can contribute to item response theory (IRT) analyses [14].

Humans cannot live alone on remote islands, even if they have status, honor, power, authority, and money. Attention and consideration for the people around us are what make people feel happy and have well-being. Unlike the past, the era of ICT has come. However, the fundamentals have not changed. It's about spending time and attention on the matters and people in front of you now. Attention is the essence of life and has a timeless and enduring value. The intergenerational continuity has been somewhat moderated by various family-related factors [15]. Regardless of the father's previous experience in his earlier life, family associated with higher mobility, education, and marital stability of the father will tend to bring the offspring with optimal life experiences during earlier life.

Among various medical philosophies, Hinohara-ism seems to be one of the adequate concepts that can be accepted by most Western and Asian people [16]. He

established NEA in the first period of the 21st century. The purpose of NEA can be summarized as follows [17]: i) Mission is to transmit peace and love to the next generation, ii) Themes include love, initiation, and endurance, iii) Goals are a favorable lifestyle, an active social role, maintaining faith and hope, feeling gratitude in daily life, and always being possible to create something regardless of age [18].

In summary, fundamental philosophy and actual continuation of daily practice will bring happiness and well-being from bio-psycho-social points of view [19]. This article will hopefully become a useful reference for future psychosomatic research for happiness and well-being.

Conflict of Interest

The author has read and approved the final version of the manuscript. The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

Funding

There was no funding received for this paper.

References

- [1] Flood A. How to be happy. *New Scientist*. 2023;257(3421):46-49.
- [2] Bando H, Yoshioka A, Nishikiori Y. Medicine and philosophy with supreme humanity and achievement by great physicians, Schweitzer, Osler and Hinohara. *Int J Fam Commun Med*. 2020;4(3):74-76.
- [3] Ogawa H, Bando H, Tanaka K, et al. Meditation, Music and Medicine are three gifts from the Goddess Muses (Mousikē). *Int J Complement Alt Med*. 2023;16(3):148-50.
- [4] Bando H, Yoshioka A, Iwashimizu Y, Iwashita M, Doba N. Development of Primary Care, Lifestyle Disease and New Elderly Association (NEA) in Japan – Common Philosophy with Hinohara-ism. *Prim Health Care*. 2017;7:281.
- [5] Nishikiori Y, Bando H, Yoshioka A. Combination of Health Concepts of Reason for Life, Ikigai Well-Being and Hinohara-ism. *SunText Rev Neurosci Psychol*. 2023;4(1):158.
- [6] Waldinger R, Schulz M. *The Good Life: Lessons from the World's Longest Scientific Study of Happiness*. United States: Simon & Schuster, Inc;

2023. Available from:

<https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/The-Good-Life/Robert-Waldinger/9781982166694>

- [7] Hart J. Harvard Study of Adult Development: Human Connection is Key to Health and Well-Being. *Integrat Complement Ther* 2023 Jun 16;29(3):122.
- [8] Lawton G. How to think about... Ageing. *New Scientist*. 2023;258(3438):45-46.
- [9] Kotva S. *The Occult Mind of Simone Weil*. Philosophical investigations. 2019 Dec 27;43(1-2):122-41.
- [10] Tarrant J. *The Light Inside the Dark: Zen, Soul, and the Spiritual Life*. United States: Harper Perennial; 1998.
- [11] Petrova K, Nevarez MD, Waldinger RJ, Preacher KJ, Schulz MS. Self-distancing and Avoidance Mediate the Links Between Trait Mindfulness and Responses to Emotional Challenges. *Mindfulness* (N Y). 2021 Apr;12(4):947-58. [PMID: 34149956]
- [12] de Bruin EI, Topper M, Muskens JG, Bögels SM, Kamphuis JH. Psychometric properties of the Five Facets Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) in a meditating and a non-meditating sample. *Assessment*. 2012 Jun;19(2):187-97. [PMID: 22589426]
- [13] Goldberg SB, Wielgosz J, Dahl C, Schuyler B, MacCoon DS, Rosenkranz M, Lutz A, Sebranek CA, Davidson RJ. Does the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire measure what we think it does? Construct validity evidence from an active controlled randomized clinical trial. *Psychol Assess*. 2016 Aug;28(8):1009-14. [PMID: 26460893]
- [14] Shallcross A, Lu NY, Hays RD. Evaluation of the Psychometric Properties of the Five Facet of Mindfulness Questionnaire. *J Psychopathol Behav Assess*. 2020 Jun;42(2):271-80. [PMID: 32655208]
- [15] Atherton OE, Graham EK, Dorame AN, Horgan D, Luo J, Nevarez MD, Ferrie JP, Spiro A, Schulz MS, Waldinger RJ, Mroczek DK, Lee LO. Is there intergenerational continuity in early life experiences? Findings from the Harvard Study of Adult Development. *J Fam Psychol*. 2023 Aug 24. [PMID: 37616090]
- [16] Hinohara S. Facing death the Japanese way— Customs and ethos. In *Japanese and Western bioethics: studies in moral diversity 1997* (pp. 145-154). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.
- [17] Doba N, Hinohara S, Yanai H, Saiki K, Takagi H, Tsuruwaka M, Hirano M, Matsubara H. *The new elder*

Citation: Bando H, Yoshioka A, Nishikiori Y. Perspectives for Happiness and Well-Being from Medical Philosophy, Hinohara-Ism, and Mindfulness. J Health Care and Research. 2023 Oct 04;4(3):100-103.

Commentary

citizen movement in Japan. Faces of Aging: The Lived Experiences of the Elderly in Japan. Matsumoto Y, Ed. Stanford University Press, Stanford. 2011 Mar 17:36-59.

[18] New Elderly Association:

<https://www.shinrojin.com/>

[19] Bando H. Fundamental Philosophy of Health and Medical Care would be Hinoharaism. J Health Care and Research. 2019 Nov 20;1(1):1-3.



Keywords: Attention, Human Relationship, Robert Waldinger, Shigeaki Hinohara, Simone Weil, Five Facets of Mindfulness Questionnaire

**Manuscript no: 2582-8967-4-100
J Health Care and Research**

Volume: 4 Issue: 3

103